IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-6 (canceled)

Claim 7 (original): An image formation system having a link copy mode in which, of a plurality of image formation apparatuses connected to each other for enabling data communications, an image formation apparatus functioning as a master machine reads an image of a document to be copied, the read image is transferred to at least one other image formation apparatus functioning as a slave machine, and printing of the read image is shared by said master machine and said slave machine,

wherein said slave machine reports the functions available in said slave machine to said master machine, and said master machine inhibits the operation in the link copy mode when the link copy mode and a non-executable function in said master machine or said slave machine is selected.

Claim 8 (original): The image formation system according to the claim 7, wherein the functions include a staple function.

Claim 9 (original): The image formation system according to the claim 7, wherein said master machine is connected to the salve device peer to peer.

Claim 10 (currently amended): An image formation apparatus connected to at least one other image formation apparatus such that data communications can be executed between the two image formation apparatus apparatuses, said image formation apparatus comprising:

a reading unit which reads an image of a document;

a printing unit which prints the read image of a document;

a display unit which displays keys used for selecting a function; and

a controller which executes a link copy mode in which the

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read image is transferred to said other image formation apparatus for sharing the printing of the read image with the local image formation apparatus and said other image formation apparatus,

wherein if the link copy mode in said local image formation apparatus or said other image formation apparatus is selected, then a key for selecting, the non-executable function is not displayed on said display unit.

Claim 11 (original): The image formation apparatus according to the claim 10, wherein the functions include a staple function.

Claim 12 (original): The image formation apparatus according to the claim 10, wherein said image formation apparatus is connected to said other image formation apparatus peer to peer.

Claim 13 (original): An image formation system having a link copy mode in which, of a plurality of image formation apparatuses connected to each other for enabling data communications, an image formation apparatus functioning as a master machine reads an image of a document to be copied, the read image is transferred to at least one other image formation apparatus functioning as a slave machine, and printing of the read image is shared by said master machine and said slave machine,

wherein said slave machine reports the functions available in said slave machine to said master machine, and said master machine does not display a key used for selecting a non-executable function when the link copy mode in said master machine or said slave machine is selected.

Claim 14 (original): The image formation system according to the claim 13, wherein the functions include a staple function.

Claim 15 (original): The image formation system according to the claim 13, wherein said master machine is connected to the salve device peer to peer.

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Claims 16-21 (canceled)

Claim 22 (currently amended): An image formation apparatus connected to at least one other image formation apparatus such that data communications can be executed between the two image formation ~~apparatus~~ apparatuses, said image formation apparatus comprising:

a reading unit which reads an image of a document;

a printing unit which prints the read image of a document; and

a controller which executes a link copy mode in which the read image is transferred to said other image formation apparatus for sharing the printing of the read image with the local image formation apparatus and said other image formation apparatus,

wherein a mode for executing a non-executable in said local image formation apparatus or said other image formation apparatus is cancelled when the link copy mode in said local image formation apparatus or said other image formation apparatus is selected.

Claim 23 (original): The image formation apparatus according to the claim 22, wherein the functions include a staple function.

Claim 24 (original): The image formation apparatus according to the claim 22, wherein said image formation apparatus is connected to said other image formation apparatus peer to peer.

Claim 25 (original): An image formation system having a link copy mode in which, of a plurality of image formation apparatuses connected to each other for enabling data communications, an image formation apparatus functioning as a master machine reads an image of a document to be copied, the read image is transferred to at least one other image formation apparatus functioning as a slave machine, and printing of the read image is shared by said master machine and said slave machine,

wherein said slave machine reports the functions available in said slave machine to said master machine, and said master machine cancels a mode for executing a non-executable

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in said master machine or said slave machine when the link copy mode in said master

machine or said slave machine is selected.

Claim 26 (original): The image formation system according to the claim 25, wherein

the functions include a staple function.

Claim 27 (original): The image formation system according to the claim 25, wherein

said master machine is connected to the salve device peer to peer.

Claims 28-33 (canceled)

Claim 34 (currently amended): An image formation apparatus connected to at least

one other image formation apparatus such that data communications can be executed between

the two image formation ~~apparatus~~ apparatuses, said image formation apparatus comprising:

a reading unit which reads an image of a document;

a printing unit which prints the read image of a document; and

a link copy mode in which the read image is transferred to said other image formation

apparatus for sharing the printing of the read image with the local image formation apparatus

and said other image formation apparatus,

wherein if the link copy mode is selected and said other image formation apparatus is

not in the state where data communications can be executed, then the link copy operation is

inhibited.

Claim 35 (original): The image formation apparatus according to the claim 34,

wherein said image formation apparatus is connected to said other image formation apparatus

peer to peer.

Claim 36 (currently amended): An image formation apparatus connected to at least

one other image formation apparatus such that data communications can be executed between

the two image formation ~~apparatus~~ apparatuses, said image formation apparatus comprising:

a reading unit which reads an image of a document;. a printing unit which prints an image; and

a reporting unit which reports to said other image formation apparatus whether data communications can be executed from the local image formation apparatus to said other image formation apparatus,

wherein an image of a document read by and transferred from said other image formation apparatus is printed in said local image formation apparatus.

Claim 37 (original): The image formation apparatus according to the claim 36, wherein said image formation apparatus is connected to said other image formation apparatus peer to peer.

Claim 38 (original): An image formation system having a link copy mode in which, of a plurality of image formation apparatuses connected to each other for enabling data communications, an image formation apparatus functioning as a master machine reads an image of a document to be copied, the read image is transferred to at least one other image formation apparatus functioning as a slave machine, and printing of the read image is shared by said master machine and said slave machine,

wherein said slave machine reports to said master machine whether data communications can be executed from said slave machine to said slave machine, and said master machine inhibits the operation in the link copy mode when the link copy mode is selected and said slave machine is not in data communications executable state.

Claim 39 (original): The image formation system according to the claim 38, wherein said slave machine periodically transmits a communication connection confirmation signal indicating whether connection has been established to said master machine, and said master machine receives the communication connection confirmation signal and determines whether said slave machine is ready for communication.

Claim 40 (original): The image formation system according to the claim 38, wherein said master machine is connected to the salve device peer to peer.

Claims 41-52 (canceled)

Claim 53 (original): An image formation system having a link copy mode in which, of a plurality of image formation apparatuses connected to each other for enabling data communications, an image formation apparatus functioning as a master machine reads an image of a document to be copied, the read image is transferred to at least one other image formation apparatus functioning as a slave machine, and printing of the read image is shared by said master machine and said slave machine,

wherein said slave machine reports to said master machine whether data communications can be executed from said slave machine to said master machine, and said master machine inhibits selection of the link copy mode when said slave machine is not in a state where data communication can be executed

Claim 54 (original): The image formation system according to the claim 53, wherein said slave machine periodically transmits a communication connection confirmation signal indicating whether connection has been established to said master machine, and said master machine receives the communication connection confirmation signal and determines whether said slave machine is ready for communication.

Claim 55 (original): The image formation system according to the claim 53, wherein said master machine is connected to the salve device peer to peer.

Claims 56-140 (canceled)